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FIFTY-TWO YEARS AGO IN ALBERTA

Donald Graham, Western Pioneer, Recalls Buffalo Hunt from Old Fort Edmonton to International Boundary in 1872-73. Came West from Winnipeg to Edmonton in Red River Cart--Buffalo in Tens of Thousands--Adventures with Indians and Wolfers.

One of Western Canada's few remaining old-timers, a real pioneer of the days when only the buffalo, the red man, the whiskey traders and a few of the gallant Royal North West Mounted Police roamed the western Plains--this is Donald Graham, of Armstrong, British Columbia, former member of the legislative assembly of that province and for fifty-two years an honored and respected resident of Western Canada.

The passage of time has apparently left the faculties of this grizzled westerner undimmed. Hale and hearty, despite his seventy-five years, he talks of fifty-one years ago at old Fort Edmonton, when Edmonton was a fort and nothing more, as though it were yesterday. He has seen the buffalo in their tens of thousands grazing and stampeding on the plains south of the Red Deer river; he has seen the whiskey traders at their nefarious work; the wolfers at their more or less profitable trade; was an active participant in the so-called Cypress Hills "massacre"; traded and bartered with the Indians when the aborigine was still unremoved from his state of primeval wildness; took part for two years in the C.P.R. survey and finally settled

down to fruit and general farming in the Okanagan valley.

Mr. Graham first came west with the Wolsey expedition in 1870.

CAME WEST AS BOATMAN IN WOLSEY EXPEDITION

"I hadn't been in Ontario long enough to belong to the volunteers" said Mr. Graham "but I had always had a hankering for hunting and the wild places and I was crazy to go west so I enlisted under Wolsey as a boatman and came west."

Mr. Graham stayed two years in Manitoba and then in 1872 the urge to go further west possessed him and he came on to Fort Edmonton in a Red River cart. At Fort Edmonton he put in two months mining for gold in the river Saskatchewan and then struck out for southern Alberta on a hunting expedition to the big buffalo fields. This hunting party eventually carried him down to Fort Benton, Montana, across into Oregon and up into the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia where he settled and made his home.

From 1894 to 1898 Mr. Graham was a member of the British Columbia legislature under Premier Theodore Davy and Premier Turner. Mr. Graham represented East Yale. At the present time there are five members in the provincial hourse for the territory that Mr. Graham represented thirty years ago. Throughout the Okanagan Valley he is known as a staunch and upright citizen and one of the few remaining links with the past. For the past thirty-five years or more he has been a justice of the peace; judge of the Small Debts' court for a number of years; judge of the court of

revision for the Vernon Assessment District for the past nine years and still carrying out his duties in this capacity, while he was also reeve of his municipality during the first three years of its existence.

Pioneer of the west as he is, with vivid recollections of some of the most interesting and thrilling adventures that have fallen to the lot of any westerner, Mr. Graham has ever fought shy of the interviewer and until now has never publicly told of his experiences of the early days. On the occasion of his recent visit to Edmonton, however, his memory went back to the early days and he was prevailed upon to tell of his hunting expedition south from old Fort Edmonton to the international boundary in the winter of 1872-73. Here is his story just as he told it:

WINNIPEG TO EDMONTON IN A RED RIVER CART

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In the summer of 1872, having always had a hunting bug in my bonnet, I left Winnipeg in a Red River cart, en route for Edmonton, determined to have a go at the buffalo.

That fall, I made arrangements wit Donald Todd, a half-breed, to go out with him from Edmonton to the plains and camp in his lodge with the assurance that I would get all the hunting I so greatly desired.

Todd's wife was a consumptive and they were going out to winter on the plains with the hope that it would cure her. She was a full sister of a half-breed named Godin, who had brutally murdered his wife the year before on the banks of the Saskatchewan below Edmonton. He had settled the matter according to the custom at that time by giving

the father of his murdered wife six hourses as compensation. As the mounted police were expected to come into the country shortly and might take the matter up, Godin's friends got quite excited. I remember Todd becoming quite indignant at the bare mention of such a possibility. The matter had been settled according to custom, he said, and there would be trouble if the police interfered. However, he was arrested four years later and taken to Winnipeg for trial, but was released again, the Roman Catholic priests and others taking the case up in his favor. I imagine that the authorities of the time came to the conclusion that it would be as well to let "sleeping dogs lie" as hundreds of crimes of various kinds had been committed prior to the advent of the police and it would be impossible to make any sort of satisfactory investigation into them.

The half-breeds were satisfied that a new order of things was coming and were prepared to conduct themselves accordingly. It was a case of "The King is dead, long live the King," but the dividing line between the old and the new order should not be crossed.

FLOUR, TEA, PEMMICAN, BUFFALO AS PROVISIONS

When starting for the plains south of Fort Edmonton I left my cart behind me and brought a flat sleigh, which was very much like a large toboggan and which slipped easily over the top of the snow. I also brought what I considered was plenty of provisions, including flour, tea, pemmican, dried buffalo meat, etc., all of which could be bought from the Hudson's Bay company, also buffalo fat or tallow

and marrow fat. These last mentioned were always put up in bladders, extended to about eight inches in diameter. The marrow fat was really quite a superior article, being somewhat granular with a decided yellow tinge and not so hard as the other.

However, I had not taken into consideration the half-breed custom of starting out with only a few days' provisions on hand, depending entirely upon what they could kill for their support. Todd's provisions soon gave out and as a matter of course mine began to go the same way. Small game of various kinds helped out, but as the buffalo had not come north that winter as usually expected our larder soon began to get somewhat depleted. Our difficulties were also added to by the fact that Todd was compelled to travel slowly on account of his wife's illness.

SHOOTS FIRST BUFFALO; THE HUNTER'S ELATION

About this time two white men, Add Mc-------- and Dutchy Charley, caught up with us and invited me to go along with them. As they travelled fast I decided to go, expecting to come back to Todd with meat in a few days. After about two days travel we camped in the Hand Hills on top of the highest hill in sight and one which had a plentiful supply of timber on the north side of it. From our point of vantage we could see for miles and in fact before our lodge was quite set up a buffalo appeared grazing around two buttes, similar to the one we were on, with timber on the north side of them, and not more than three-quarters of a mile away, so I took my rifle and started

off to try and get him. Upon getting to the first butte I was quite disappointed as I could not see the buffalo. I walked all round the first clump of timber, possibly an acre, and then went on to the second hill. While standing there I heard a crackling in the timber I had just left and turned around in time to see my buffalo coming out on the run. As he was heading in my direction I dropped out of sight until he got into the depression between the two hills. I then ran to the brow of the hill and got behind a clump of brush. In a few minutes he came cantering up and passed on the run within just a few steps of where I knelt. I shot him as he passed by. He ran to the brow of the hill, pitched forward on his breast and rolled to the bottom.

It was my first buffalo and I was greatly elated. He looked as big as an elephant to me as he passed by. My friends were pleased also. We dressed him that evening, taking the best of the meat to camp with us and the balance I put strychnine in for the benefit of the wolves. He was in very good shape for a bull out alone, as animals of this description are generally in poor condition, being usually old and weak in consequence of being driven out of the herd by the younger and more vigorous bulls.

LOST ON THE PRAIRIES AND FROST BITES

The weather was fine and clear, but bitterly cold, with always more or less wind, which kept the tops of the hills swept clear of snow, so that our horses had plenty of feed without having to paw for it. The following day as we

could see no buffalo in sight Add and I determined to hunt as far south as possible and be back by night. We shot one buffalo on our way, but found that he was too old and thin to be of any use. We kept on until farily late when seven buffalo came feeding over a hill. As it was all open country we could not approach them and so we lay still, hoping they might disappear in some hollow and thus give us a chance. As they did not do so and it was getting late we decided to try a long shot at them. Of course we had to take off our mittens to shoot and in the short time it took Add to fire two or three times with his Winchester his fingers were frost-bitten. The winter before he came near to losing a foot by frost bite and was in consequence very nervous. He grew highly excited when he noticed his hand and exclaimed "Oh Donald, what will I do to save my hand?" I took a handful of snow, rubbed his fingers vigorously for a while, took his gun and told him to slap his hands about for a time and they would be all right. This proved to be the case and shortly we were on our way again.

We had delayed too long as it was and darkness came down quickly on us so we feared it might be difficult to locate our lodge. I could see what looked like a bright light ahead of us and remarked that Charley had left the lodge ocver open so that the light would guide us. Imagine our consternation when we discovered that we were heading for a bright star just coming up over a hill. Fortunately for us when we were nearly past our camp Charley came out

to get some fire-wood and we caught the flash of the camp fire as he threw back the flap. If he had not done so it is hard to say what might have happened as it was fully thirty miles to timber in the direction we were heading. I was very careful afterwards to be within a reasonable distance of camp at nightfall.

CHUNK OF WOLF FAT AS CHRISTMAS TID-BIT

We could see every sign of a blizzard coming so we hurriedly moved our lodge to the foot of the hill on the north side where we not only had the advantage of shelter, but carried our wood down-hill instead of up. There we passed the Christmas of 1872 and one of our tid-bits was a chunk of wolf-fat each. Thanks to the success of my strychnine bait I had got three large grey wolves. They were very fat and it was the regular thing to render out the back fat and eat it as a relish with our leaner buffalo meat. I think that in cold countries where the diet is practically all meat the human system requires a good deal of fat. Personally I used to detest it, but on occasions I could take a large chunk of wolf fat, and not only eat it, but enjoy it.

The blizzard developed all right with blinding intensity but we were snug and comfortable in the shelter we had picked. We heard aftewards that seven or eight lodges of Indians camped some distance to the south of us had their lodges all blown down and they just simply had to lie where they were for between two and three days until the storm abated.

Between Christmas and New Year's four young Indians (Bloods) came to our lodge. They were on foot and told us they had no food and were hungry so we gave them a piece of the buffalo I had killed.

Fortunately for me, I had determined to go back and join Todd again and bring some of the buffalo meat along with me. So I left Add and Dutch Charley, camped that night, in a point of timber, and the following day rejoined Todd. While I had been gone an Indian and his squaw had camped along side of Todd and his wife. I do not know whether they were relatives or not, but they were certainly very friendly with us as long as I remained with them. A day or so later Add and Charley came along with a single horse, hauling their effects, on their way back to Edmonton. It seems that our friendly Indians to whom we had given the buffalo meat were out on a horse-stealing expedition and had stolen three of their horses and would have made away with the fourth one also except for the fact that it happened to be near camp. They followed the Indians for some distance in an effort to recover the stolen animals but were unable to catch up.

I found out afterwards that it was always well to watch your animals closely. If a few bucks came along as they did in this case it was almost certain that they were out on a horse-stealing expedition. They always traveled light with just their guns and a hair lariat hidden underneath their blankets.

It was a week or ten days before we moved south.

With Todd and his wife the friendly Indian and his squaw headed for the camping grounds where I had weathered out the blizzard with Add and Dutch Charley. My object in this was the hope of finding some more dead wolves by the bait. On visiting it, however, there was not even a scrap of dead buffalo to be seen. Instead there were two dead Indian dogs and the ashes of a number of camp-fires. Evidently a camp of starving Indians had been there and they had used up what meat was left. I was told that the strychnine could be boiled out of the meat, but nevertheless I was a pretty anxious chap for a few days, as I thought if any Indians had gone the same way as their dogs it might prove to be an unhealthy quarter for me.

After a few days we heard of a camp of half-breeds who had been south of the Red Deer river and were returning north with a plentiful supply of buffalo meat. As I had some tea left we rode over to their camp and I traded some of it for a quarter of meat.

THREE ON BUFFALO HUNT IN BITTER WEATHER

A day or two later, Todd and the Indian determined to go on a buffalo hunt. I of course accompanying them. They asked that we should leave all of the meat with the two women as we were sure to get buffalo further south. To this I consented and the following morning, after a somewhat scanty breakfast, we started on what proved to be the hardest and most miserable trip I ever took. It was bitterly cold, snowing and drifting, with the wind in our faces. The Indian took the lead riding a buffalo horse of

Todd's. We followed with the flat sleighs, with a lodge and all the firewood we could carry. How the Indian ever contrived to keep his course, I am unable to say, because between snow and drift no landmarks could be seen, in fact at times we could hardly see the person ahead of us. We kept on until night when we camped in a somewhat sheltered hollow, pitched our lodge and made ourselves as comfortable as possible, making a small fire to help out a bit. We had nothing to eat which did not help to make matters pleasanter.

I think Todd felt the intense cold as much as I did. It was a case of either one of us hugging the little fire, off and one, all night. What surprised me was to see the Indian strip off such clothing as he had on, wrap himself up in his buffalo robe, and sleep like a top all night. Even the horses felt the cold, as they came up and stood in the lee of the lodge for shelter, the only night I knew them to do so.

Next morning with nothing to cook we were soon off. We left the lodge standing where it was, the Indian taking the lead and we following with the sleighs to take back the meat. It was afternoon before we sighted buffalo and then we had a long hard run before we killed one. It takes a pretty good running horse to catch up with a young cow especially. Todd and the Indian had quite a feed on the raw meat, but hungry and all as I was, it beat me.

We soon had the animal cut up, loaded on the sleighs, and struck back for camp. I would hesitate to say how much meat we ate that night. We had a number of pieces on

sticks roasting before the fire. When cooked to our liking it soon disappeared, another piece taking its place. This was kept up for an hour or more.

INDIANS SHOW CONTEMPT AND SCORN FOR GREENHORN

As the weather had moderated a good deal we passed a failry comfortable night, made an early start the next morning, and got back to the lodges about sundown. We had used up all the provisions I had brought from Edmonton and for some time we had depended entirely on what we could kill. In consequence it was always either a feast or a famine and from what I could make out nearly all the half-breeds and Indians were in the same position. There was plenty of buffalo south of the Red Deer river but the half-breeds and Crees did not seem to be at all anxious to go south into the Blood and Blackfoot country until a good force of them had gathered and were moving south, all of them on pretty short commons. We camped one night alongside of a pretty deep coulee, which sometimes run across the country for miles, and in the present case had plenty of timber in it, so I went down to bring up firewood. I saw a big porcupine, but as I considered it to be useless I passed it by. A little Indian boy came along and at once attached it. As he was too small to kill it I killed it for him. I then got my wood and went back to camp. Apparantly the porcupine incident had got there ahead of me. The Indian squaw was in the lodge with Todd's wife and they were apparently discussing my utter uselessness as a provider. They put their hands up to their mouths and with a peculiar

clucking sound in their throats, would finish up with "moonias," which is simply Cree for "greenhorn". This they did two or three times and I must say that I never saw contempt more plainly expressed in the eyes of anyone as though to say: "We have no meat in the lodge--the idea of a grown man passing by a fat porcupine and letting a little Indian boy get it." I kept a sharp lookout for porcupine after that, hoping to redeem myself i their eyes. I soon got one but doubt if it helped any. And as a matter of fact, I came to the conclusion that if I had to be a partaker in the feast, I did not want redemption.

A VISIT TO SARCEES AND WHAT HAPPENED

In our move southwards we got into the vicinity of a Sarcee camp and as I expressed a wish to go into their camp and see them at home a young half-breed agreed to go with me. He warned me, however, that I must go with a blanket around me, Indian fashion. It seemed that the Sarcees depended entirely on dogs for transportation, large savage huskies, part wolf and part dog and as they might attack a white man it might go hard with him. Going into their camp, somewhat nervously I must say on account of the warning about the dogs, I suddenly felt a sharp nip on the calf of my leg. Feeling sure it was a dog I jumped around quickly. There, to my astonishment, was a little boy, evidently greatly delighted with himself, squatted on his haunches, grinning all over, and thumb up to his nose in the most approved gaming fashion. I might deceive the dogs with the blanket evidently, but not the boy.

We were received very cordially in the chief's lodge and it was both the largest and most comfortable lodge I had seen. The squaws had a large pot boiling on the fire with buffalo meat, blood and I don't know what else in it and after we had shaken hands with every brave in the lodge the squaws came and handed each of us a cup. Just then one Indian, who I suppose had been missed in the general hand-shaking, came and held out his hand. Thinking he wanted the cup I held it out to him. With a look of disgust plainly evident on his face, he turned around and went and sat down again. Seeing my mistake I jumped up at once and went and shook hands with him, which apparently made it all right. Our cups were then filled from the pot and I enjoyed it very much, although I daresay if I had enquired too closely into its composition I might not have liked it as well.

Speaking of Indians showing offence I recall an incident that happened to an old neighbor of mine, who had been a member of the Quebec battalion. Seeing the Indian steerman in the boat he was/in enjoying his pipe my friend asked him for a smoke. The pipe was passed without a word. My friend, after very carefully wiping the mouthpiece, proceeded to smoke. Apparently the wiping process must have offended the steerman, for on the pipe being passed back he looked my friend straight in the eye, deliberately broke the mouthpiece off, threw the piece away and put the pipe back in his pocket without a word.

OFF IN PURSUIT OF THE BUFFALO AGAIN

The half-breeds and Indians were always scouting around hunting for game. One of them brought word to camp of several hundred buffalo feeding about a day's journey to the east. So camp was struck at once and the whole lot, which made quite a large party by this time, headed in that direction. About nightfall one of the breeds wounded a buffalo. He said it could not possibly live more than two or three hours, so the next morning, as it had run in the direction we were going, we followed its tracks and came on the dead animal a little before noon. All hands being short of provisions, camp was made at once, and meat cooking became general. The buffalo could not have been dead more than twelve or fourteen hours, but decomposition sets in very quickly when the entrails are not removed. One could actually pull the uncooked meat of this animal to pieces with the fingers and the taint was quite strong, but I heard no complaints.

After about an hour we moved on as we were not far from where the buffalo herd had been seen. Upon locating them a conference was held at which it was decided that those who had good running horses should make a wide detour and come on the buffalo from the opposite side so that when they started to run they might head towards camp and give as many as possible a chance for a shot. I took the direction, which we thought the buffalo would take when started, a number of the others doing the same. Sure enough when the riders attacked the herd they came in our direct-

ion, three or four hundred of them, closely bunched and going at a tremendous pace. They passed within about seventy yards of us. I was successful in dropping a fine young cow with a shot from my rifle as they went by. However, we did not have as much meat as one might anticipate, the rule on the plains being that all who assisted at the dressing of an animal were entitled to a share of the meat. This was a faithfully observed custom and several of the unsuccessful ones assisted us. I remember some time later, when Todd and I were unsuccessful, we assisted at an Indian kill. Our help was cordially received, almost as if we were the benefactors, and we were sent away with a generous supply of meat.

DIGGING OUT BEAVER A TOILSOME JOB

We then moved down to the Red Deer river where buffalo and other game was plentiful so that it was a continual feast. Still, small game was not despised. One of the half-breeds found a couple of beaver houses on the banks of the river and I learned something about digging out beaver. He proceeded to cut holes in the ice opposite the entrance to the houses, wnet away for a few hours, and came back with a number of sharpened stakes. When he was fairly sure that the beaver were in their dens he drove the stakes quickly into the mud, thus blocking up the entrances and making prisoners of the beaver. He invited Todd and me to assist in digging them out, promising that we would get a share in the meat, which the Indians looked upon as a great delicacy. The first house was a small one

and although frozen hard, we dug it out quickly and got one beaver. The next was quite large and yielded two beaver, but we certainly earned them as we were chopping the hard frozen ground for the best part of the day before we got them. I found that amongst these people, everything that walked and some things that didn't were eatable, big or little, inside and out, nothing was wasted. I had tried most of it but I was a good deal like the Yankee who could eat crow and said: "I kin eat crow, but I don't hanker after it."

BUFFALO THICKER THAN CATTLE IN A PASTURE

It was now early in March of 1873 and quite a large party of breeds and Indians had gathered together south of the Red Deer river, intending to visit one of the nearest trading posts south of Bow river. At that time the only white men between the Red Deer and the boundary line were American whiskey traders and wolfers. It may not be amiss to mention that for the whole distance to the Bow river, a little better than two days' travel, I never saw cattle thicker in any pasture than the buffalo herds we encountered. There must have been tens of thousands of them. On one occasion we traveled in an open space not much more than half a mile across. The buffalo opened out in front of us as we progressed and closed up behind us as we passed.

After crossing the Bow river and when within about two miles of the trading post the party halted and proceeded to spruce up a bit according to their individual notions.

The Indians all produced red and blue paint, with which they painted their faces. On arriving at the post I found it was not a pretentious building at all, although a fair-sized one, and built strongly of logs, surrounded by a palisade. It was an outpost of Healy & Hamilton's and managed by a Mr. Davis and my experience of him was that he was a very kindly hospitable man. I told him that I did not intend to return to Edmonton, but was going to continue on to Fort Benton, Montana. He, however, advised me strongly against going on alone. The Indians met would be Bloods and Blackfeet, he said, and as they might be the worse of liquor, it would be very dangerous, to say the least. He then cordially invited me to stay at the post until their wagons came along for the furs, which would be in about a month. I accepted his very kind offer which gave me a good opportunity of becoming acquainted with conditions generally.

The post consisted of three rooms, a general living and cooking room, store room and trading room. Along the front of the latter was a passageway, possibly about eight feet wide and into this the Indians came to do their trading. It was connected with the trading room by means of a trap door which could be closed quickly in case of emergency. I was told that on no condition must Indians be allowed inside. I suggested that in case they determined to get in the roof did not seem to offer any great obstacle to them. They just laughed and said that way had been tried once or twice, but the defenders "lit the candles for

them," and it was never tried now. "Lighting the candles" it seemed, consisted in shooting through the roof with Winchester rifles whenever footsteps were heard above, which proved effective. The garrison consisted of six men, which included the manager and interpreter. The interpreter was a negro. I was told that the negroes master the Indian language more quickly and easily than the white man. Of course, liquor was the greatest trading article at the post. This, as made up, consisted of ten gallons of alcohol to a forty-gallon barrel filled with water and colored with burnt sugar.

KEG AND BUFFALO ROBE BIG ITEMS IN TRADING

One day a minor chief of the Bloods came in to trade. He had quite a retinue with him and I watched the proceedings with a good deal of interest. They were not at all hurried in their trading. Apparently there was not trouble about ammunition for the Indians knew what they wanted and got it, but after that it was a continual wrangle with the squaws, who did occasionally win out and get a bright piece of apparel, or something else they wanted.

Generally, however, a small keg and buffalo robe was passed in. Into the keg a half gallon of liquor was poured which was the value of a robe at that post. This worked out at between fifty and sixty dollars for each gallon of alcohol. I counted particularly and keg and buffalo robe were passed in eighteen different times. This was a very fair sample of the trading usually done. The Indians were not encouraged to drink around the post, rather the reverse,

but liquor was the cause os many bloody forays in their own lodges. I was told by one man, who claimed to have taken particular pains to verify the statement, that seventy of the bloods were killed during a single winter in drunken quarrels among themselves.

MANY LIVES LOST IN BLOODY INDIAN FEUDS

It was also told of a family of bloods called the Mule family. At one time they numbered twenty-eight lodges--approximately between fifty and sixty fighting men. A feud broke out between them and another branch of the same tribe and at the time I speak of the Mule family had been reduced to two lodges and the survivors had taken refuge in the South Piegan camp in order to avoid complete extinction.

One day a small party of Indians came in to trade. Among them was a fine looking young fellow. His thumb and wrist had been split open by a knife thrust and he was in bad shape. He also had a bullet hole through the point of his shoulder which was not yet healed up--enough for any one man one would think. I watched them as they rode away after completing their trading. When a mile or two out I noticed a puff of smoke and after a while the wounded Indian rode back with a bullet hole in his chest. His wound was dressed by Mr. Davis and a bed made for him. He was at the post for several weeks receiving every possible attention. He may have been quarrelsome but he showed gratitude for the treatment received, as he sent Mr. Davis a fine horse as a present after he left.

One more instance of the effect of the whiskey trade on the Indians. A Blood chief named Maycasto had brought a considerable quantity of liquor back to his camp with him and of course they celebrated when they got there. After the festivities had got pretty well along a few of the young fellows thought they would have a bit of fun at the old chief's expense. So one said: "Old Maycasto is too drunk now to help himself and he has been pretty mean to us sometimes; we will tie him up and get even with him." They made a laughing move toward him, but the chief drew his revolver and in less time than it takes to tell there were two dead Indians and several more wounded. Through the liquor trade these southern Indians were much better armed than the Crees.

Amongst those who came into the post I took particular notice of a young squaw. She had a dress of a very light colored and well turned buckskin. It was made to conform to the shape of the body. It was trimmed with the usual buckskin fringe, but had also a double row of elk's teeth in a semi-circle beneath the neck and quite a number on the sleeves. Taken all in all it was quite a spectacular looking dress and one that would have attracted attention anywhere. The dress also proclaimed that the husband was a mighty hunter.

The cook at the post was a Spaniard. He was a surly brute and carried his revolver strapped to his side as regularly and continually as any of his other apparel. He had a young squaw, a mere child, whom he was whipping un-

mercifully one day. I tried to make him desist, but he turned on me threateningly with a move towards his belt. "Don't you try to mix in this, it's none of your d---- business," he said. So I wisely concluded to leave him alone and went out. There seemed to be a different feeling amongst a good many of these men to anything I had been used to.

WOLFERS PLIED TRADE OVER A WIDE DISTRICT

The only other white inhabitants of this large district were the wolfers. These men, like the liquor traders, outfitted at Benton, Montana, and came north well prepared for the business in which they were engaged. The outfit included horse wagons, running horses, Winchester rifles and a goodly supply of strychnine. They generally worked in couples, although they might sometimes have an extra man or two along to do camp work and skin wolves. They operated some distance apart. Each outfit killed twenty-five or thirty buffalo for bait and these animals were well opened up and two bottles of strychnine (one-eighth ounce each) put into every carcass. The bait would be scattered over a district, possible two townships or more in extent. In some cases more than one hundred wolves have been poisoned around a single bait and as these skins were worth from $2.50 to $3.00 each at Benton it was quite a profitable and attractive business for adventurous spirits. It was not, however, without a spice of danger. One outfit operating to the north-east of where Calgary now stands had been attacked by Indians, one of their number

killed and the others driven away, leaving a large number of wolves unskinned.

THE BIG-HEADED DUTCHMAN AND WOLFING EXPEDITION

One day a German, known as the "big-headed Dutchman" came to the post, his wife (a squaw) and several children along with him. He said that he had been over the district w ere these wolfers had been and that he knew of between forty and fifty wolves lying there unskinned. He did not like to risk going after them alone, but if any one went with him he would go. After some conversation I agreed to go along with him on the understanding that we were to work separately and that we should both skin wolves as long as there were any in sight. I was told at the post that my companion had a rather unsavory reputation but I decided to take a chance. We started the following morning with just our saddle horses, crossed the Bow river and got to the first bait about nightfall. Around it there must have been the carcasses of between forty and fifty wolves, all skinned, and on less than an acre of ground. My companion assured me that the wolves which he had seen were all within a radius of a couple of miles or so. From this I gathered that after the trouble with the Indians the wolfers had hurriedly skinned the wolves in the immediate vicinity of the baits and then left.

The following morning we started skinning. Wolves were scattered here and there, seldom more than a mile from the bait. Toward noon while I was skinning a wolf the Dutchman passed me, seemingly in a hurry. When I had fin-

ished I followed and soon found the reason for the haste. Just as I came up over a hill I saw my companion busily gathering wolves together--he must have had seven or eight of them piled up. There was another wolf some distance away and he started on the run to get that one also without ever looking in my direction. I at once knew that his actions meant that our agreement was at an end. I rode down quickly, dismounted, laid my rifle alongside me and began making motions as if I was skinning. He was bent over by this time, dragging the other wolf along, but happening to look up he saw me and began yelling at the top of his voice that those were his wolves. I yelled back: "That's played out, Dutchman. I found this bunch." He came running towards me and when within about sixty yards drew his revolver. I had hardly anticipated that, but I picked up my rifle quickly, cocked it, and had it levelled across my knee when he came up. I did not want to hurt him if I could get out of it, but I was not going to be shot up if I knew anything about it. He came up to within about thirty yards of me, stood for a minute, and then quietly slipped his revolver back into its holster.

"I gathered these wolves together," he said. "There are four more just over the hill; you can go and skin them."

"All right," I answered, "but this is not according to our understanding; however, since you are so mean about it, you can have this bunch whether the others are there or not."

He had evidently looked around fairly closely when he had passed through before because I found the four wolves as he stated. I had them skinned and started back before he was through. I had been thinking the matter over in the meantime, and although I did not consider myself to blame I felt very much ashamed at the idea of going back to the post and telling them of our quarrel. It was a case of two men all alone in a place where, to say the least, we would be in extreme danger should the Indians come along on the same quest. So I rode back to the Dutchman and said in as friendly a manner as possible: "Well, have you got over being angry yet?" He looked at me as savagely as one of the bests which he was skinning might have done. So I said: "I see you have not," and rode on, feeling as if I were in a strange country, and as a matter of fact I was with north of the Red Deer river, a fairly orderly country consisting of Cree Indians, half breeds, the Hudson's Bay company and British trades; south of the Red Deer river Bloods, Blackfeet, whiskey traders, wolfers and American western influence--chaos in fact.

We kept apart after that, both skinning industriously until near night. I then went back to our camp, determined that if at all possible we would not go back to the post as open enemies at any rate. The Dutchman was there when I got in and somewhat reluctantly met my advances. He thawed out after a bit and then began telling me how angry he was when he saw my rifle cocked and pointed at

him, apparently not giving a thought to the fact that he had drawn his revolver first. He said that it was all that he could to keep from shooting me in the back when I passed him. He swore positively that if it had been either a half-breed or an Indian he would have shot without hesitation. After thinking it over, I came to the conclusion that Todd's wife and her friend were not far out when they called me Moonias (greenhorn).

However, I was very much pleased to find that I had as many skins as the Dutchman--twenty-one each. We got back to the post the following day and when our skins were tacked up and stretched on the walls Mr. Davis allowed us two dollars each for them. I did not mention the quarrel and I do not think that the Dutchman did, because no one said a word about it.

FINAL TRIP TO WHOOP-UP NEAR MONTANA BORDER

As the wagons were not expected for some time yet and two men came along on their way to Whoop-up, I decided to accompany them. Both were Americans--one a white man and the other a half-breed named Starr, who generally acted as interpreter for some of the traders. Our trail to the south led directly through what is now the town of High River. After passing that point we turned more to the east, heading straight for Whoop-up. We were passing through a dry country and were sometimes short of water. On one such occasion Starr went out and killed a buffalo calf only a few days old. He opened it up and took out its stomach, which was found to contain nearly a

gallon of clear-looking milk, and of this both my companions drank heartily. As they seemed to enjoy it, I partook also, my greatest objection being to the container. This I spread out as much as possible, so as not to touch my cheeks. The milk itself was just plain curdled milk and to thirsty men it was quite palatable. What struck me as strange was that although I had read dozens of western stories I had never seen such an incident mentioned. I tried it afterwards myself but the calf I killed was a week or two older and the milk was unfit for use, being full of hair from the mother's udder. I found that a young buffalo calf never runs very far when the mother is chased. They would lie down flat in the grass and when one rode up to them, jump up and run in between the horse's legs, apparently thinking that it was the mother come back. I had to get off my horse in a hurry once as the animal seemed to be frightened quite out of its wits. The calf followed me right into camp.

We arrived at Whoop-up without any other incident worth recording. This was the headquarters of Healy and Hamilton. It was quite a pretentious post and situated at the junction of the Belly and St. Mary's rivers, near the Montana boundary. From Whoop-up I later made my way over to Fort Benton, across into Oregon and up into British Columbia, where I made my home.

As told by Donald Graham, former member of the British Columbia Legislative assembly and pioneer of western Canada. Mr. Graham came to Edmonton from Winnipeg in the summer of 1872 in a Red River cart.